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Nota Bene

The September issue was intended as the last of a series on neighborly love, analyzed from a *rational* viewpoint, but several of the articles in this issue have turned out to be supplementary remarks on the same subject.

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PROGRESSIVE CALVINISM is not a theological publication. It is instead, a praxeological publication (or as most people would say, a social science publication) emphasizing the relationship between ethics, economics and politics. Although we do not intend to cover theology, there are occasional comments from readers that we should restrict ourselves to economics, because theology is not our field. We shall not ignore these suggestions.

However, various subjects which have been discussed in this publication are not so much theology as cosmology. By cosmology we mean the character of creation, the general operation of the world, how it is put together, and how it functions. It is not feasible for us to neglect cosmology. Economic ideas should not be detached from the frame of creation and the world of reality.

Several of the articles in this issue concern themselves specifically with problems of cosmology. But they have a bearing on ethics and theology.

The colloquial term often used for cosmology is "world and life view." This latter term is supposed to indicate how you look at reality generally. It is not feasible to suppress one's "world and life view" and consequently cosmology will continue to be a subject touched upon in PROGRESSIVE CALVINISM.

We deplore the application of naive cosmological ideas to theology thereby placing theology in a false setting.

The Reformation Needs To Be Repeated

The ideas that constitute the Christian religion should not be detached from other human knowledge. If the rest of human knowledge changes, even though the data or "givens" of revelation are unaltered, nevertheless the *total* is different, and consequently religion has been affected *relatively* by the changes in secular knowledge. For example, the discoveries of Galileo (that the sun does not revolve around the earth, but *vice versa*) had an effect on how Scripture was subsequently interpreted. As secular knowledge increases, the framework in which the revelation of Scripture is "set" is significantly altered. It is an error to deny that, and false to allege the contrary. The Belgic Confession (in Article II) calls *nature* one of the two books through which God may be known. Now *nature* includes the *laws of human action* as well as laws of nature in a physical sense. Steadily more is becoming known regarding both types of laws. The book of nature in that two-fold sense is being opened more and more.

If what has happened in the latest 1,800 years of Christianity is viewed in perspective, should the situation be considered static in regard to doctrine? The answer must be, *No*. The Christian

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Reformed church, for example, in 1924 in regard to Common Grace made pronouncements not previously formulated or declared to be "doctrine"; (see July 1958 PROGRESSIVE CALVINISM, pages 215ff). The churches themselves make changes for good or evil; and in addition on all sides around them there are increases in secular knowledge which bear significantly on the total body of sacred doctrine.

In perspective, what is the picture regarding changes in doctrines, when both Roman Catholic and Protestant doctrines are considered? In what follows we intend no preference to either Catholicism or Protestantism. Most of the writer's ancestors (all of them between heathendom and the Reformation) were probably Roman Catholics, and he has no inclination to attack their devoutness or judgment in their times and circumstances, whatever they may have been. Fewer of the writer's ancestors (those since some time after the Reformation) have been Protestants. In the long line of all ancestors the record, if known, would include heathens, Roman Catholics, Protestants and skeptics. Some of them may have been indifferent to religion and morality. When imagining what the record may have been, we are disposed to be tolerant and humble, as our descendants in turn will need to be concerning us.

How look at the Reformation relative to Roman Catholicism? The Reformation was a *rationalistic* deviation. It rejected various accretions to the Christian religion, or carry-overs that had become obsolete dogma, which *within* the Mother Church it did not seem possible or feasible to abandon. The Reformers were extreme "rationalists" in their day. They were innovators, relative to the Mother Church.

It is not implied that the Roman Catholic church did not concern itself about abandoning obsolete dogma, either before or after the Protestant Reformation. A fair perspective will reveal that the Roman Catholic church has changed continuously and substantially, at times faster on some subjects than the Protestant churches. But at the time of the Reformation the Reformers *were changing much more rapidly* than the Mother Church from which they seceded or from which they were excommunicated.

The Protestants had scarcely become "reformed" when they (inevitably, shall we say) formalized and "froze" their doctrines

and ideas, as the Mother Church had done previously. The Protestants were, then, more rationalistic than the Roman Catholics only temporarily, namely, at the specific time of the Reformation, but they did not retain their temporary tempo.

How do we look at Luther and Calvin, Melanchthon and Knox and the Reformation? As being meritorious, just as the Roman Catholic church must be considered as having been meritorious in its history. But does that make Luther, Calvin or Melanchthon *et al* final authority for us today? We could not accept that. Whenever we have tried to find an answer to a peculiarly modern problem we have found the old Reformers vague and confused, if not contradictory to themselves on that subject.

We are, then, disposed to be as rationalistic in our day toward the Reformers as they in their day were rationalistic toward the Mother Church. Many of the ideas of the Reformers need modernization. The Protestant churches should become *progressive* again.

The material in PROGRESSIVE CALVINISM has been radically influenced by the modern science of *economics,* a subject on which both the Roman Catholic church and the Reformation churches have been and continue to be neglectful. Economics began to be significant as late as two hundred years *after* the Reformation.

Despite the vital significance of modern economics for Christian ethics, economics is not to our knowledge taught in a single Protestant seminary in the United States. Nor would such teaching necessarily be significant; there are "economics" and "economics" — not everything that goes by the name has genuine rational merit. We do not consider socialism to be economics.

The Reformers when they taught more rationalistically than the Mother Church simultaneously declared that they were turning back to the plain and simple teaching of Scripture. We believe we do the same; we hold to the *strict interpretation* of Scripture definitely more than do the present-day "orthodox" Protestant churches. To carry the parallel further: the Reformers accused the Mother Church of substituting *works* for *faith;* similarly, we have a gravamen against modern Protestant religion, namely, that it has falsified the doctrine of *brotherly love* in the direction of making it sentimental, sanctimonious and unworkable; when we criticize the prevailing definition of brotherly love we do that on two grounds

— logic and Scripture. Our objection to the prevailing Protestant doctrine of brotherly love is as strong as the Reformers' objections to indulgences.

The Mother Church rejected the rationalism of the Reformers. Present-day Protestant Churches reject modern "rationalizations" of ethical ideas. If the Roman Catholic church unduly emphasized works, modern Protestantism unduly emphasizes *brotherly love,* or rather, *its definition* of brotherly love. Any one questioning that is as distrusted by modern Protestantism as the Reformers were distrusted by the established church. The way of the innovators is always hard.

What is this definition of *brotherly love* that should be challenged? It is in many respects the definition of brotherly love by communism, From each according to his ability to each according to his need. The people who founded communism and who proclaim this pious law of love are the same people who detest the Hebrew-Christian religion. They are astute enough to know that their law of love is not reconcilable with the ethics of the Christian religion. Many of those who profess the Christian religion do not realize that the communists are consistent in their thinking, while they (some modern Protestants) do not realize their own inconsistency, namely, that the doctrines in Scripture on brotherly love cannot be reconciled to the sanctimonious definition of brotherly love under communism.

Ricardo Right And Ricardo Wrong

The high place which must be given to Ricardo's Law of Association in ethics, economics, cosmology and political policies, to which law we have called attention in the previous issues (July through September, 1958), should not induce readers to conclude that we *generally* adhere to all of Ricardo's ideas in economics.

Many of Karl Marx's ideas are a re-hash of Ricardo's ideas with a substantial deterioration in the hashing process. We reject Ricardo's land rent theory; his explanation of the character of interest (*interest* in the economic sense of *all unearned* income); and his ideas underlying the so-called Iron Law of Wages.

We acknowledge that we belong, in a sense, to the English classical school of economics, and are followers of Adam Smith,

David Ricardo, Malthus and John Stuart Mill. That is, *some* of their conclusions in economics are of indisputable validity and are foundation stones for economics for all time — for example, what Smith wrote about the advantages of division of labor, or Ricardo about cooperation, or Malthus about population.

When we write (1) that what Marx accepted of these classical economists we reject, and (2) that what we accept of these classical economists Marx rejected, this does not mean that the difference is entirely explained by arbitrarily picking and choosing quotations from Ricardo. It is also a matter of interpretation. The English classical economists were on critical points, it was discovered later, ambiguous and even contradictory. These *early* economists being pioneers were in fact, despite their genius, unclear on vital and significant economic problems. It is "half-valid" for Marx and other socialist-communists to look at these classicists as a fountainhead of socialist-communist ideas. But it is equally or more valid for individualists and libertarians, who have diametrically opposite ideas, also to appeal to statements that Smith, Ricardo or Malthus made. In fact, these libertarians are more in the right, because Smith and his followers were *generally* in favor of freedom. Therefore, whenever they made ambiguous statements those should all be interpreted in the general light of their favoring freedom. Then these men are kept in the category not only of great thinkers but also of thinkers who were *in the main right.* The particular use by Marx of ideas from Smith and Ricardo should, therefore, generally be rejected, because Marx really made a "biassed selection" of the evidence.

It should be remembered what was written by Böhm-Bawerk as long ago as 1890 in his article on "The Austrian Economists": "*The most important and most famous doctrines of the classical economists* [Smith, Ricardo, Malthus *et al*] *are either no longer tenable at all, or are tenable only after essential alterations and additions.*"

Moralists today often moralize without knowing first hand what these classical economists taught. They know even less about the important work in economic theory which has proceeded steadily for 200 years since then, the conclusions of which are invaluable for relating together the ancient scriptures and the laws of economics.

The Extent Of The Effects Of Adam's Fall

Simple Questions

Two simple questions can be asked, the answers to which will be illuminating regarding to what extent one believes that the Fall of Adam affected the "world." These two questions are:

1. Did Adam's Fall change the climate of the earth?
2. Did Adam's Fall make self-love sin?

Suppose someone answers these questions with an emphatic *no,* will that make him un-Biblical in his views? We think not.

In the Commandments derived from Moses we are commanded to love our neighbor *as ourself.* Therefore, *self-love* is a virtue, according to the most fundamental moral document in Scripture. There is no reason to believe that that which is now recommended, even required of us as a virtuous act, was condemned before the Fall. Self-love is a fact of creation, and was not nullified nor condemned by the Fall.

In regard to whether or not Adam's Fall changed the climate of the world everyone is entitled to his own opinion, but he should reflect on the probabilities, and he should be cautious not to make the Hebrew-Christian religion appear ridiculous, thereby hindering acceptance of the Christian religion. There is a north pole, an equator, and a south pole. Depending on *location* and not (in our view) depending on sin, it is uncomfortably cold at the poles and uncomfortably hot at the equator. The reason is that the sun's rays strike at the equator at right angles, and at the poles at oblique angles. Now it is possible that the temperatures at the poles and at the equator were identical before Adam's Fall and that all over the earth the climate was perfect, but that necessarily entails the idea that at that time the earth was not shaped as a ball, and that the sun's rays hit the earth everywhere at the same angle. The earth must have been flat!

Statement Of The Problem In General Terms

The two specific questions which have been asked can be reformulated in *general* terms. Then they will read respectively:

1. Did Adam's Fall change *natural law?*
2. Did Adam's Fall change *praxeological law?*

Natural law is a term inclusive of climate. *Praxeological law* is a term inclusive of everything pertaining to human action, including self-love.

Without hesitation we hold that Adam's sin altered neither *natural* laws nor *praxeological* laws in any respect. The cosmos was not changed by sin; instead man was changed. There was not a single *law* changed by the Fall, but *human conduct* was changed. It was the *deviation* from law that constituted sin. *Law,* of whatever character, having been fixed by creation, is unalterable.

We speak of *natural laws* and give the term meaning by referring to gravity, electrical phenomena, biological phenomena, etc. When we speak of *praxeological laws* there may be difficulty in giving the term content. What is the greatest praxeological law that there is? The so-called *law of self-preservation* or self-love, that is, the adoption of suitable means to preserve the self and make life worth living. All other praxeological laws are subsidiary to this master law. The moment self-preservation and self-love are rejected as legitimate objectives an attempt is being made to condemn the character of the original creation. There is a revolutionary shift in principles of morality when people consider self-love a phase of sin rather than innate in creation.

Unharmonious Texts

The general character of the teachings about creation and sin in Scripture conforms to the foregoing description. But there are a few texts which *seem* to teach the contrary. There is especially the text about the ground being cursed because of sin, and henceforth bringing forth thorns and thistles, and men working in the sweat of their brow, and women having pain in childbirth (Genesis 3:16-19). These facts are not to be denied — there are thorns and thistles, there is painful physical labor, and it is reported to be painful to give birth to babies.

Consider the last-mentioned: was the anatomy of women changed by Adam's sin so that thereafter it became painful to give birth to babies? It is now painful, too, to anyone to be pricked by some sharp instrument. He screams and jerks away from the painful — and dangerous — object. The pain however was useful for self-preservation. Did Adam not have nerve centers for recording pain before he fell? Maybe the pain of childbirth has the same

function as all other pain — to stimulate action — in one case to avoid danger or take steps to eliminate harm, and in the other case to give birth to a child.

Some thorns and thistles, sweat and fatigue, pain and distress, it appears reasonable to believe, were originally part of creation and not of the Fall. Sin *aggravates* these unpleasantnesses, because man has not adjusted so well as he should and could; but sin has not *originated* these physical and physiological phenomena.

Assume sin suddenly disappeared; would thistles and thorns begin to wither and die; would nerves begin to atrophy so that there would be no more pain (to warn of danger); would everything become *effortless* so that there was no work involved in getting babies, or obtaining food, clothes, shelter, conveniences?

If someone believes that the Fall *changed everything unrecognizably,* he should be very cautious about giving any description of the pre-Fall world. That will have to have been so different a world from anything that we know *that it is utterly impossible to imagine what it was like.*

Two basic ideas reduce the problem which has been discussed and make the views expressed rational:

1. Creation was supralapsarian* in plan; and
2. Sin did not affect the creational aspects of praxeological laws (such as self-preservation); instead sin is action in disharmony with such praxeological laws.

Adam, in our view, was not a prince striding through paradise in grand style. To the contrary, he had no clothes, no tools, no fire, no shelter, no soap, no bathtub, no shaving equipment, no drinking water except the river, and no sanitary facilities. That is the basic picture which Scripture presents. There were many things that beset him before he was driven from the Garden of Eden.

Your Cosmology, Or Your World And Life View

The term, "world and life view" is a colloquial term for cosmology. What cosmology you hold substantially affects your theology and your ethics.

Sometimes when people declare that they are talking theology they are in reality talking about cosmology — the way they think the world has been put together and how it functions.

*See May 1957 issue, page 142f.

For example, if you believe that the world was created without living things having an urge for self-preservation and survival and well-being — that is, without self-love — but instead believe the original world to have been without those creational characteristics, and then if you believe that self-love dawned on the scene only when Adam fell, well, then of course, self-love is a phase of the Fall and of sin and not a phase of creation.

We consider self-love to be unalterably a phase of creation. The pursuit of self-regarding interests is not *per se* sin; rather it is virtue.

When the Holy Spirit of God, or anybody, or "common grace" contributes to the "restraint of sin," thereby helping hold society together, is that *grace* or is that *creation?* Of course, if nothing creational holds society together, then a massive quantity of Total Depravity in men requires a lot of "grace." It will certainly have to be "common." But if creational factors, for example, the (mathematical) laws of association *a la* Ricardo operate regardless of Total Depravity, and if those factors stem from creation and not from grace, then why call them "common grace"; why not admit that *creation* helps hold society together?

To mix creation and grace can contribute to a very dubious cosmology or "world and life view." The result may be considerable "confusilation."

Total Depravity Has A Meaning Dependent On The Cosmological Framework In Which It Is Set

Cosmology As A Framework

Religion can be looked at as wholly independent of science, but the soundness of that idea may be doubted. The problem can be stated in this way: is religion something set in a frame of creation; or is creation something set in a frame of religion? What is the frame and what is the picture?

To that question the answer should be that creation is the frame of reference; it is antecedent in time and significance.

Science endeavors to fathom things of creation. In proportion as it correctly does that religion can in part build on science, or on a sound cosmology.

In what follows we present an illustration of how an article of religion has one meaning if it is based on a primitive cosmology, and how it has a significantly different meaning — and a more sensible one — if it is based on a realistic description of reality, which itself may not be clearly revealed in Scripture, because Scripture is not a comprehensive book on physics, economics, politics, zoology or some other science.

Ideas On Society And Common Grace

The Christian Reformed Church decided in 1924 that it needed a doctrine of Common Grace in order to neutralize conclusions which it believed followed from its belief in the doctrine of Total Depravity. It reasoned in what appears to be this frame of ideas:

1. Men are since Adam's Fall totally depraved, incapable of any good and disposed to perpetrate evil.

2. The Total Depravity of man is so bad that no society can hold together and exist unless there is a neutralizing agent.

3. Nothing is capable of holding society together except some kind of *grace.*

4. Saving grace is only for the elect and the few; therefore, if society is to be held together, some more comprehensive grace than saving grace is necessary.

5. The grace required to hold society together must be possessed by every member and so it must be *common* to everybody.

6. That common grace is the product of "the general operations of the Holy Spirit." Nevertheless, although it has that origin, it is *not* saving grace.

Unless you accept the foregoing you cannot be a preacher in the Christian Reformed church, nor an elder or a deacon. When you take such offices you sign that you accept the teachings of Scripture, as determined by the interpretation in the *Heidelberg Catechism,* the *Belgic Confession* and the *Canons of Dort.* But these in turn are to be interpreted according to the *Three Points on Common Grace* adopted in 1924. If, contrarily, you refuse to accept an interpretation of the first *Three Standards* according to the *Three Points on Common Grace* and instead declare that you will preach contrary to the *Three Points on Common Grace,* then

you will be unfrocked and excommunicated. In other words, the doctrine that a combination of two facts is necessary to explain the survival of society — (1) total depravity sufficiently nullified by (2) the general operations of the Holy Spirit — is a serious doctrine in the denomination.

The Frame Of Ideas About The Solar System

Before Galileo the general idea was that the earth was the center of the solar system and the body about which everything else revolved. Galileo said it was different — the earth was not the center and sun, moon, planets and stars did not revolve around the earth. Here were two frames of reference: the earth or the sun. At least one of these had to be wrong.

The Bible does not *teach* anything about the solar system. It naturally uses language based on the simple observations of everyday life and speech, and no great significance can be ascribed to that perfectly natural way of writing.

Is there a corresponding "frame" for the ideas of total depravity and common grace? What follows is intended to show that there are in regard to total depravity two "frames of reference" which differ in essential character. If one frame is accepted, then common grace (if it exists) must have one meaning. If another frame is accepted, common grace (if it exists) must have a different meaning.

The Cosmological Assumptions Underlying Common Grace

Is there a basic cosmological *assumption* underlying the doctrine of common grace, which assumption is not questioned and which may be grossly contrary to fact?

There is such an assumption. It is this: total depravity will (if unchecked) dissolve society, *because Adam's Fall destroyed the natural bond of society which God had created.*

Two questions immediately arise: what was that "natural bond"; and if it existed, was it destroyed by Adam's Fall? The Christian Reformed church has, to the writer's knowledge, never been explicit regarding what that natural bond is, although what it is, if it exists, is obviously a crucial question.

An inference might be made, to wit, the natural bond might be considered to be brotherly or neighborly love. Then the ques-

tion arises: what is neighborly love? Is it that we all are our brothers' keepers, as Cain "legislated" when he was making a lying defense for murdering Abel?

Or is "neighborly love" one hundred percent charity, from each according to his ability to each according to his need? That was Karl Marx's definition of neighborly love — full-fledged charity far beyond what Scripture specifies as charity.

An alternative view is that the natural bond of original society was self-love established by the character of *creation.* That self-love would be viewed as not sinful but as beneficial to all members of society *because all men were unequally unequal** (by creation) *and therefore it was mutually profitable to cooperate, or associate together, to be* (if you wish to express it that way) *good neighbors, or* (in Biblical language) *to have neighborly love.*

In this view, that self-love genuinely holds society together and that cooperation is *mutually* beneficial *because men are unequally unequal,* there are some basic mathematics involved (see July issue, pages 207-224). Because of *unequal inequality* of men it is spectacularly profitable to avoid coercion, fraud and theft which would hinder free exchange and cooperation among men. In other words, it is *genuinely profitable for you, me and everybody to be good.* To be not good to your neighbor consists in your not letting him be himself, or pursue his own interests, or manifest his inequalities relative to you, or engage in division of labor. When you do that — rob your neighbor of his *liberty — you really hurt yourself;* consider Ricardo's law.

What then holds society together? An unalterable bond — *self-love* plus *cooperation, according to Ricardo's law.* Adam's Fall changed neither of these.

Nor did Adam's Fall change the mathematics of cooperation by *unequally unequal* men. Adam's Fall no more changed mathematics than it changed gravity. Examine the mathematics in the July, 1958 issue, pages 208ff., and ask yourself: is that true now (which it must be) but was it *different* before Adam fell; or is that all unchanged? The only rational answer is that there has been and can be no change, for the simple reason that Adam's Fall did not change the laws of logic.

*See July through September issues on being "unequally unequal."

We come then to the simple and obvious conclusion that God put the necessary ingredients to hold society together (namely, self-love and the mathematics of mutual benefit) *into his creation,* and that those ingredients were as unremovable by sin as gravity is unremovable by sin.

In short, it was not in man's power *at any time* to dissolve society; nor will it ever be. God did such a wonderful work by creation that the "general operations of the Holy Spirit" have not been and never will be necessary as laborious labor to hold society together. Adam's Fall will not burden the Trinity.

Readers who will dispute this, if they really understand Ricardo's law, are those who extend the effect of Adam's Fall to an absurdity — those who say that gravity was changed by Adam's Fall, and mathematics, and logic, and that self-love is not the same after Adam's Fall that it was before Adam's Fall.

When the Christian Reformed church in its Synod of 1924 *assumed* in its declaration in Point 2 of its *Three Points of Common Grace* (1) that the natural bond of society is something else than self-love, and (2) that Adam's Fall could change mathematics (the mathematics of Ricardo's Law), it *assumed* two points wholly ignored, wholly unproved and contrary to fact.

The Two Alternative Frames Of Reference For Total Depravity And Common Grace

There are then two frames of reference for Total Depravity and Common Grace. The frames of reference are determined outside the field of morality; they are determined by the creational order, the original cosmogony of the world and the cosmological order. The two frames of reference are:

(1) Total Depravity and Common Grace against a background of *no creational bond to society except charity;* and

(2) Total Depravity and Common Grace against a background of the *two creational bonds of* SELF-LOVE and INEQUALITY.

The Reality Of Total Depravity

Total Depravity is not self-love, but the employment of improper means to gratify self-love — namely, coercion, adultery, fraud, theft, covetousness. The attack should not be directed

against self-love, but against certain instrumental phases of self-love; it is those which are condemned by the Hebrew-Christian religions and by true Hebrew-Christian ethics.

Naturally, in proportion as moralists divert their efforts away from *real* sins (those just mentioned) and concentrate in condemning self-love and failure to work for equality they are wide of the mark. They do not indicate in an elementary way any more what true morality is. This conclusion is fortified by their attitude toward various sins condemned in the Second Table of the Law; they condone or tolerate those sins wherever it is dangerous to resist them. Consider obvious examples:

(1) They condone coercion of all kinds by labor unions. An alleged "purpose" justifies the means! There is alleged injustice and inequality in labor relations and to end that, coercion by labor unions is considered permissible. But the charges are generally false and the means violate the law of God.

(2) Adultery is often defended. All that is necessary is for the "state" to approve a divorce and a remarriage (regardless of the Law of God) and the churches usually accept both acts. This inconsistency goes under the flag of obeying the organization which wields "the sword"! An organization allegedly created by God which disobeys God should not be obeyed when it openly violates the direct law of God itself.

(3) Theft is engaged in on a massive scale by the government through inflationism. The churches remain silent. Some petty chicken theft they condemn, but they do not criticize theft on a massive scale perpetrated by a government. When a government as Nehru's in India sets terms on mission activities in India — the terms that nothing the Indian government does (including inflationism) is to be criticized by a missionary — the churches supinely accept the terms. Mission work cannot be done without teaching the Law of God "across the board!" Some mission activity consists in talk about the love of God and of brotherly love. A spurious "love" but no "law!"

(4) The governments of the world have undertaken "social security." Essentially, the whole project has a fraudulent aspect. What is provided is not "security." Young people today who will qualify for social security forty years hence will discover

when they begin to collect on their social security — if there is no increase in the number of dollars — that it is inadequate.

(5) In regard to covetousness, the churches which teach the social gospel teach a doctrine which makes covetousness a virtue; "From each according to his ability to each according to his need" has its roots in covetousness, under the pretense that it is love.

Instead of attacking *sins* forbidden by the commandments, the churches attack *creation,* that is, self-love and inequality!

The Problem Of The "Hatred" Of God

Calvinists allege that they believe in predestination — that God foreordained all things, including the election of the elect, and the reprobation of the reprobate.

Not *many* of the children of men have been happy about accepting those doctrines; there is, therefore, a steady defection of Calvinists from the ranks of those who bravely assert these doctrines. In military terms, the ranks of those who are *genuinely* Calvinists in their doctrines are constantly being decimated.

The principle reluctance is about the doctrine of reprobation, that God foreordains some to permanent misery; and consequently the first withdrawal from a Calvinist position is *silence* about the doctrine of reprobation. Instead the talk turns to the love of God; there is no mention of His wrath and His righteousness. Reprobation is not repudiated but is *ignored.*

The second step in defection is not a direct repudiation either, but consists in placing a doctrine parallel to reprobation, which is *not reconcilable* with reprobation; for example, a doctrine that God "loves" the reprobate. In the human mind no doctrine of *simultaneous* love and reprobation can be reconciled. Such words reflect insincerity or intellectual confusion.

The final step in the drift away from historic Calvinism is to voice positive *dissent* from the doctrine of reprobation. This makes a man a heretic from Calvinism. (The earlier steps do not seem to do so.)

The problem shapes up in this manner: men are totally depraved. Something must operate to neutralize at least some of that depravity. God has to do that neutralizing, and such neutralizing must be *grace.* It benefits the reprobate as well as the elect. And

so, God "hates" and "loves" at the same time — reprobates and shows genuine common grace. As proof of common grace, the survival of society is cited.

Such a statement that God loves and hates simultaneously — can be accepted only if it is admitted that it is irrational, a *doctrine* or an article of faith, not "good sense."

However, the doctrine of reprobation is less vulnerable and can be defended more sincerely if a sounder cosmology is adopted. Suppose the existence of society is not a manifestation of "love" or "hate" at all, but suppose that society is a product of *creation,* namely, is held together by (1) self-interest and (2) unequal inequalities. Suppose, further, that sin has annulled neither self-interest nor unequal inequalities; that is, suppose that those two facts are praxeological *laws,* which sin cannot unmake as laws. Then *society* exists by creation and not by grace or love.

Then it is not necessary to declare the absurdity or insincerity that God loves and hates *simultaneously.*

In a world where there is respect for rationality, for common sense, — in such a world, the doctrine of reprobation will be vulnerable unless people read Scripture in a framework of a sound cosmology. In the framework of a sound cosmology a doctrine of common grace is supererogatory — absolutely unnecessary. A sound cosmology makes (1) common grace look ridiculous and (2) is a prerequisite to *rational* retention of the doctrine of reprobation.

A "Lawless" Pre-Fall World

What was the cosmology of the pre-Fall world of Adam before he sinned, if the popular view of the Garden of Eden is correct, namely, that it was a paradise?

If the Garden of Eden was a genuine paradise, then it was a *lawless world.* By *lawless* we mean that everything was conducive to Adam's comfort *regardless of natural laws.* Our emphasis here is on *natural* laws.

Natural laws are *general;* they are *regular;* they are (to human observation) *invariable;* they *do not change* to fit an individual's need for comfort; they rule on relentlessly. Unless individuals all want exactly the same thing at the same time, in the same amount, in the same way, and of the same quality, these natural *laws* will serve one person well according to his wishes, but another poorly

simply because his wishes are different. For example, Adam may have been working and felt hot and therefore wanted a cool breeze. But Eve at the same time may have wished to take an afternoon nap and wanted a warm breeze. For the Garden of Eden then to have been *paradise* requires that the same wind would blow cool and warm at the same time. In other words, in such a Garden of Eden there were no *laws* but only *special purpose events.*

The Garden of Eden could not have been a perfectly blissful paradise (as people imagine) unless there were no natural laws, but instead complete variability in events. Then, so the reasoning must be, when Adam fell from his state of rectitude, he suddenly found himself in a "new world" with inexorable natural laws — hunger, cold, thirst, darkness, disease, dangerous animals, thorns and thistles, sweat, fatigue, pains of all kinds, including that of child birth. These *laws* must have come into existence by his Fall. Sin, in short, converted a lawless world (which had feather-bedded Adam) into a world ruled by inflexible, and therefore, hard laws.

The *natural laws* to which we here refer are in the fields known as cosmogony or cosmology.

The Cosmology Underlying The Social Gospel (and also behind Common Grace)

The cosmology underlying the social gospel is obscurantist, and flaunts creational facts.

The social gospel's cosmology includes the idea that there should be a striving toward *equality.* In order to establish equality *self-love* is to be abandoned, or if not abandoned must be condemned. When self-love no longer sinfully motivates a man, then *neighborly love* will righteously motivate him. Then that man has *agape,* the right kind, the only pure kind of love, namely, *unmotivated love,* which does not consider the merits or demerits of the person loved but loves *indiscriminatingly.*

The two important positives in this system are *equality* and *indiscriminating love of the neighbor.* These two ideas are causally related; if one is abandoned, the other must be abandoned; if one is included, the other must be included. For, how can equality be attained unless charity is shown (gifts are given) to whoever has less regardless of his merit? Furthermore, how can love be

unmotivated toward others regardless of merit, without the end-result being equality?

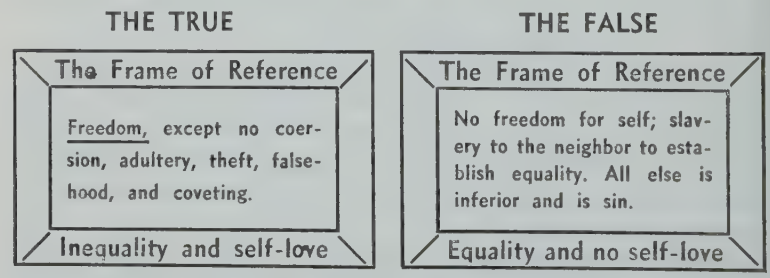
The social gospel is a "complete" system, that is, the illogic is completely logical. The total is wrong but the details fit. The doctrine of equality and indiscrimination has been fully formulated by the Niebuhrs, Oxnams and Bennetts; the doctrine of the condemnation of self-love (that is, that all must be for the neighbor) has been worked out fully by Bishop Anders Nygren of Lund, Sweden, in his *Agape and Eros.* Collectively they have a unified system (of error). Regardless whether these men believe in the "Fall" of Adam, they obviously consider self-love to be sin and inequality to be injustice; or at least, self-love is lower than neighborly love and inequality is less attractive than equality. These are, in fact, ideas which are practically universally accepted.

The men who have formulated the principles of the social gospel have apparently never heard or understood Ricardo's Law of Association. They have never worked on the problem of *defining* equality. They do not understand the blessings of *unequal inequalities* (as defined in the July through September, 1958, *issues of* Progressive Calvinism); consequently they attack inequalities rather than embrace them. If Ricardo's Law of Association is one of the most fundamental laws of human action, and if the laws of human action are a basic part of the cosmology of the world, but if the most widely accepted moral and religious leaders of the Western World are obviously uninformed about Ricardo's Law, or if they reject its incontrovertible mathematics and its universal application, then assuredly they are guilty of wanton obscurantism.

This is aggravated by the age-old but still prevalent (although outdated) confusion between creation and sin. Self-love is not looked upon in the social gospel as a creational phenomenon *antecedent to Adam's Fall,* but as something that is associated with sin. *Creation and morality are being confused together.* If, however, self-love was "built into" creation and if God created us that way, then self-love cannot be sin *unless God made a very poor job of creation.* If He did, then Scripture is in error when it says that God saw all that He had made and behold "it was very good."

What the protestant religion needs is a return to Scripture and a harmonizing with the science of economics, and then protestantism may become *progressive*. It is certain that a new reformation eschewing the obscurantism of the past is needed.

The formulation of principles of morality by the social gospel also stands condemned on grounds other than its intellectual deficiencies only. We refer to its obvious sanctimoniousness and its *impossibility*. As a business man, as a "man of the world" we have always sensed on all sides the suppressed contempt of laymen for the clergy; why? because the clergy present such pious, unrealistic rules of conduct. Those rules of conduct are *not* derived from Scripture. The limited, restricted moral demands outlined in Scripture are *not* sanctimonious; (see the definition of brotherly love in the February through May issues of PROGRESSIVE CALVINISM in 1955). Scripture presents only hard-headed, practical rules. Yes, hard also in another sense, namely, hard to obey, because we are thoroughly depraved; the rules are not rules which it was originally *impossible* to obey; *they are not rules contrary to creation*. But the social gospel has exactly such rules — those which *are* nonobeyable because they are in violation of the laws of creation.


THE TRUE
The Frame of Reference
Freedom, except no coersion, adultery, theft, falsehood, and coveting.
Inequality and self-love
THE FALSE
The Frame of Reference
No freedom for self; slavery to the neighbor to establish equality. All else is inferior and is sin.
Equality and no self-love

If the basic principles underlying the social gospel are equality and no self-love (agape misdefined), then what are the contrary sound principles of morality? They are the exact opposites: inequality and self-love. The *inequality* to which we refer has been painstakingly defined à la Ricardo in the three immediately preceding issues; the *self-love* to which we refer has been defined in the April, May and June 1958, issues; (obviously, self-love has not been defined as freedom to be a murderer, adulterer, robber, liar, coveter).

Without qualification, the *framework* for practical morality is inequality and self-love. The actual "play" within that framework is moral or immoral depending on whether the laws in the Decalogue against coercion, adultery, theft, falsehood and covetousness are observed or not. The situation can be shown in a diagram. (See preceding page.)

When sin is defined as self-love and as failure to work for equality then the wise will all wish to continue to be sinners and will not wish to experience conversion.

But the same wrong principles that "confusilate" the advocates of the social gospel also "confusilate" a denomination as the Christian Reformed. Underlying the prevailing thinking in this denomination is the same idea that self-love *per se* is not good, and that equality is a great goal. One wing in the denomination, especially, which founds its program on common grace is not unfavorable to these principles; consider the emphasis on love (*agape*) in one of the private journals in the denomination and the propaganda in favor of equality in the lecture rooms of the college. Furthermore, the basic premises underlying the doctrine* of common grace, which is the official doctrine of the whole denomination, are that unequal inequality and self-love are not adequate factors for holding society together; they are not creational and constructive and are not even worth mentioning as factors holding society together; in fact, *only* other factors are mentioned as holding society together; consequently self-love and unequal inequality cannot have been part of a creation originally good.

There is no hope for progress in the Christian religion if it continues at the most critical points flagrantly to confuse creation and sin. Any genuine intellectual enlightenment and practical usefulness of religion in politics and business, throughout the world, depends on desisting from trying to make unalterable phases of creation part of a moral reform. About the poorest way imaginable to improve morals is to try to change creation; it is not doable. Confusion between creation and sin should be ended once for all by using a little more science and abandoning some spurious religious "doctrines."

*Doctrine — "anything not a genuine intellectual discovery; anything not a good answer to appropriate questions." These are definitions of a skeptical philosopher.

Is Socialism Poor Economics, But Good Ethics?

A not uncommon idea among economists is that socialist economics are not logically defensible, but that socialist ethics are very lofty. For example, in 1890 a Scottish economist, William Smart, wrote: "The weakness of socialist economics in view of the strength of socialist ethics . . ." What? The "*strength* of socialist ethics"! Is there any *strength* in socialist *ethics?*

In Progressive Calvinism we attack not only socialist economics but also socialist ethics. We do that not only on the basis of observation — consider the Iron Curtain countries; not only on the basis of Scripture, which forbids *every* ethical doctrine taught by socialism — if Scripture is correctly interpreted; but also on the basis of rationalism and logic in ethics. The means by which socialism proposes to attain its ends are not suitable means, but contrary to purpose. Therefore, they are logically indefensible.

The strength of socialism is not its ethics, but its sanctimony and its pandering to a sin which people wish to have removed from the list of sins, namely covetousness. The guise under which these evil ethics are paraded before men is the guise of brotherly love.

Not only: "Oh, liberty, what crimes have been committed in thy name"; but also: *Oh, brotherly love, what sins masquerade under thy name.*

When Smart wrote "the weakness of socialist economics in view of the strength of socialist ethics" what did he mean by the "*strength* of socialist ethics"? At best nothing more than the opposition to poverty. But that is not an exclusively socialist program: who is there who is not against poverty?

The quickest solution for relieving poverty is the immediate redistribution of wealth, but is it a solution? It is only one "shot-in-the-arm." It is like a man close to starvation, who needs to save corn for seed, feasting on that corn. Temporarily he feels wonderful, but when the seed corn is gone, the circumstances are far worse than they would have been had there been no feasting of corn (or redistribution of wealth). How can anything have real merit when its earlier effects for good are offset *by much greater* misery later.

It should be observed that if redistribution is morally defensible and is a good thing *today,* it should be repeated a year from now, or a half-year or a month or a week from today; *if redistribution is just, then it should be continuous.* This is equivalent to saying that private property is not a valid institution, and that theft is not sin. Whoever accepts that proposition has simply substituted Marx for Moses as his chief legislator.

Smart, as an economist, knew that that was not a sound economic program. It would destroy all incentive. Production would decrease. Instead of being based on *incentive,* society would be based on *coercion.* When theft becomes a principle for society, coercion (tyranny) is close on its heels because as incentives are removed coercion must be applied.

Smart was wholly wrong when he used the term "*strength* of socialist ethics." There is no strength but only viciousness in socialist ethics. Smart was looking only at the false promises of socialism. The promises being false, they must be evil on that account alone. But they are also evil because the *means* of the socialists to attain their alleged objectives are (1) covetousness necessarily followed by (2) coercion, necessarily followed in turn by (3) theft disguised under legality. The means of the socialists violate the Sixth, Eighth, Ninth and Tenth Commandments.

The "*strength* of socialist ethics" should be re-phrased to read, "the *strength* of the socialist *appeal to covetousness.*" That is all that Smart could really have had in mind if he had analyzed the situation adequately.

What Is Interest? Or The Quandary Of Calvinism In Economics

If you borrow money from a neighbor you pay *interest,* say at 5% or 6% a year. Interest, in such a case, is a return on borrowed money, interest on a *loan.*

Some people interpret the Bible as prohibiting such interest. (See Progressive Calvinism, Volume III, pages 68ff.) They quote the texts in Exodus 22:25; Leviticus 25:35-37 and Deuteronomy 23:19-20.

What in broader terms is this interest which you pay to the lender? It is *unearned income.* Being *unearned* the socialists at-

tack the existence of such income. To attack it basically they argue your neighbor should never have been permitted to acquire and possess that money. To own property is, they say, immoral and unjust.

Now interest on borrowed money is not the only kind of *unearned income.* There are two other kinds: *rent on land* and *profits in business.*

The strange thing is that although Moses *seems* to have prohibited interest on borrowed money, he definitely did not prohibit rent on land or profit on business transactions. Why did he seem to prohibit one kind of unearned income and oppose another kind?

How resolve the apparent inconsistency? Calvin boldly "solved" the problem by saying that Moses did not prohibit interest on money. The fact, however, is that Moses seemed to do so — if you take some things that he wrote in an unrestricted, indiscriminating sense.

The interpretation of Calvin *in general* is undoubtedly correct, although if correct, then Scripture at this point requires a rationalistic interpretation. At least, Calvin interpreted it that way, as he did various other critical passages in Scripture.

Calvin, following Moses and Scripture generally, *assumed* that private property was a moral institution. He never seems to have doubted it. Karl Marx, in contrast, basically attacked *all unearned* income — interest on money, rent on land, profits in business. Marx and Calvin were on opposite sides of the argument.

Incidentally, in the science of economics the unity in character of the three different kinds of unearned income is acknowledged by the use of *one* term, not *unearned income* but *interest.* In economics, then, *interest* has two separate meanings — (1) the unearned income derived only from loaning out money, and (2) such income *and also rent and profits.*

What is the character of interest in the second and broader sense? Here is the stimulating description of the character and problem by Eugen von Böhm-Bawerk, the famous Austrian economist [*History and Critique of Interest Theories,* p. 1, Libertarian Press, South Holland, Ill.]:

> Whoever is the owner of a capital sum is ordinarily able to derive from it a permanent net income which goes

under the scientific name of interest in the broad sense of the term.

This income is distinguished by certain notable characteristics.

It arises independently of any personal act of the capitalist. It accrues to him even though he has not moved a finger in creating it, and therefore seems in a peculiar sense to arise from capital or, to use a very old metaphor, to be begotten by it. It can be derived from any capital, no matter what be the kind of goods of which the capital consists, from naturally fruitful, as well as barren goods, from perishable as well as from durable goods, from replaceable as well as from irreplaceable goods, from money as well as from commodities. And, finally, it flows without ever exhausting the capital from which it arises, and therefore without any necessary limit to its continuance. It is, if one may use such an expression in mundane matters, capable of everlasting life.

And so the phenomenon of interest presents, on the whole, the remarkable picture of a lifeless thing, capital, producing an everlasting and inexhaustible supply of goods. And this remarkable phenomenon appears in economic life with such perfect regularity that the very concept of capital has often been founded upon it. Thus Hermann, in his *Staatswirtschaftliche Untersuchungen* defines capital as "wealth which produces a constant flow of income without itself suffering any diminution in exchange value."

Whence and why does the capitalist receive this endless and effortless flow of wealth? These words contain the problem of the theory of interest.

Earned income to be retained by the earner will appear defensible to nearly everybody — but *unearned* income sooner or later was sure to come under attack. Moses may have nibbled a little around the edges, but Marx tried to dynamite all unearned income out of existence.

Calvin in the meantime had tried to solve the loan interest problem created by Moses by basing his argument in defense of interest money on the validity of land rent. Calvin said: if you

can get rent on land you ought to be permitted to get interest on money because otherwise you will buy land and get rent, and refuse to loan money. The borrower from you can buy land with the loan and earn land rent; therefore he can pay you interest on money. In other words, interest on money rests on land rent.

Two centuries after Calvin (1509-1564), a famous French economist named Turgot (1727-1781) developed Calvin's argument more fully. This is what Böhm-Bawerk wrote about Turgot's explanation of interest generally, based on land rent specifically. Turgot's argument is an elaboration of Calvin's argument.

> The [Turgot] argument is as follows. The possession of land guarantees a permanent income without labor, in the shape of land rent. But since movable goods, even when independent of land, also can be used, and so also acquire independent value, we may compare the value of these two classes of goods and may evaluate land in terms of movable goods, and may exchange it for them. The exchange price, as in the case of all goods, depends on the relation of supply and demand (*Sec. 57*). At any time it forms a multiple of the yearly income that may be drawn from the land, and it very often gets its designation from this circumstance. A piece of land, we say, is sold for twenty or thirty or forty years' purchase, if the price amounts to twenty or thirty or forty times the annual rent of the land. The particular multiple, again, depends on the relation of supply and demand; that is whether more or fewer people wish to buy or sell land (*Sec. 58*).
>
> By virtue of these circumstances every sum of money, and any capital, in whatever form is the equivalent of a piece of land yielding an income equal to a certain percentage of the capital sum (*Sec. 59*).
>
> Since in this way the owner of capital can make it yield a permanent yearly income by buying land with it, he will not be inclined to invest his capital in an industrial (*Sec. 61*), agricultural (*Sec. 63*), or commercial (*Sec. 68*) enterprise, unless he can expect just as large a net return as he could obtain through the purchase of land over and above reimbursement of his expense and com-

pensation for his trouble. On that account capital, in all these branches of employment, *must* yield an income.

This is the primary explanation of the economic necessity of originary interest. Loan interest is derived from it in the simple way described below. The entrepreneur without capital is gladly willing, and economically may be well prepared to pay to the man who entrusts him with a capital some part of the gain which the borrowed capital yields (*Sec. 71*). Thus, all forms of interest are, in the last analysis, the necessary consequence of the circumstance that any capital can be exchanged for a piece of land which yields rent.

It will be noticed that throughout this line of thought Turgot's foundation is a circumstance which had for some centuries been the recourse of the defenders of loan interest, from Calvin on. But Turgot makes an essentially different and much more thorough-going use of this circumstance. Whereas his predecessors availed themselves of it occasionally, and by way of illustration, Turgot uses it as the pivotal point of his system. Whereas they did not consider it the sole cause of loan interest, but gave it equal rank with other sources of income, such as commerce, industry, etc., Turgot puts it by itself in first position. Finally be it said, that whereas they had used it only to explain loan interest, Turgot advances it as the explanation of the entire phenomenon of interest. And so Turgot, although he used only old materials, constructed a new doctrine, the first general theory of interest.

Defects of Turgot's Theory.

As for the scientific value of this theory, the fate which has befallen it is very significant. I cannot recollect ever reading a formal refutation of it. But a tacit verdict as to its inadequacy is implicit in the fact that efforts were continued to seek other explanations. It seemed too plausible to be refuted, but too shallow to inspire confidence. It produced the feeling that it had not penetrated to the very root of interest, even though it seemed impossible to give an exact accounting of its shortcomings.

To give such an accounting even at this late date seems to me by no means a work of supererogation. . . . For by pointing out where and how Turgot failed, I hope to make perfectly clear what the heart of the problem is toward which every earnest attempt at solution must be directed. Perhaps I can thus prepare the way for profitable pursuit of our future task. . . .

Turgot's explanation of interest is unsatisfactory because its course is a circle. The circle is concealed only by the fact that Turgot breaks off his explanation at the very point where the next step would inevitably have brought him back to the point from which he started.

The case, according to Turgot, is as follows. "A definite capital must yield a definite interest, because it may buy a piece of land yielding a definite rent. Let us take a concrete example. A capital of $10,000 must yield $500 interest, because with $10,000 a man can buy a piece of land which will return a rent of $500."

But the possibility of such a purchase as Turgot envisions is not in itself an ultimate and clearly obvious fact. So we are forced to inquire further and ask: "Why can a person with a capital of $10,000 buy a rent-producing piece of land in general and a piece of land producing a rent of $500 in particular?" Even Turgot feels that this question may be put, and must be put, for he attempts to give an answer to it. He refers us to the relation of demand and supply, which always determines (he claims) the relation of the price of capital to that of land.

But does this exhaust the questions we wish to ask, and those it is our duty to ask? Certainly not. The man who, when asked what determines a certain price, answers, "Demand and supply," offers a husk for a kernel. The answer may be allowable in a hundred cases, where it can be assumed that the one who asks the question knows sufficiently well what the kernel is, and can himself supply it. But it is not sufficient when the thing we seek is the explanation of a problem which has not yet been satisfactorily explained. If it were sufficient, we might simply

say, "Well now, the problem of interest is always concerned with phenomena of price. It is a fact that the borrower pays a price for the 'use of capital,' and it is a fact that the price of the finished product exceeds the price of all the goods from which it is produced, and that there is always an excess left over for the entrepreneur." And so we could settle the whole problem of interest by pronouncing a formula, to the effect that supply and demand so regulate the price of all goods that there is always a net yield left over for the capitalist. But certainly no one could regard it as a satisfactory explanation.

We must therefore ask further, "What deeper causes lie behind demand and supply, and govern their movements in such a way that a capital of $10,000 can regularly be exchanged for a rent-producing piece of land in general, and a piece of land producing a $500 rent in particular?" To this question Turgot gives no answer, unless we accept as such the somewhat vague words at the beginning of Sec. 57, which, even then, could by no means be termed satisfactory. He says, "Those who had a great deal of movable wealth were in a position to employ it not only in the cultivation of land, but also in different industries. The ease with which this movable wealth could be amassed and made use of, quite independently of land, made it possible to value the pieces of land themselves, and compare their value with that of movable wealth."

But if we continue with Turgot's explanation just a little way beyond the point where he left off prematurely, we shall discover that this interest, which purports to be explainable as the result of the exchange relation between land and capital, is in reality the cause of this exchange relation. That is to say, whether it is twenty or thirty or forty times the annual rent that is asked or offered for a piece of land depends chiefly on the percentage which the capital that buys it would obtain if otherwise employed. A piece of land which yields $500 rent will be worth $10,000 if and because the rate of interest on capital amounts to 5%. It will be worth $5,000 if and because the interest rate is 10%. It will be worth $20,000 if and

> because capital bears only 2½% interest. Thus, instead of the existence and the rate of interest being explained by the exchange relation between land and capital, this exchange relation on the contrary must itself be explained by the existence and the rate of interest. Nothing has been accomplished, therefore, toward the explanation of interest, because the whole argument has moved in a circle. [Böhm-Bawerk, *History And Critique of Interest Theories*, p. 40 ff., Libertarian Press, South Holland, Ill.]

It can now readily be seen that Calvin reasoned as much in a circle as Turgot did later.

We have never heard a Calvinist, as Calvinist, undertake to defend private property or unearned income from private property *logically*. Calvin himself tried but he is not a source to which Calvinists can go for help, as the foregoing quotation indicates. They must set out on their own, or learn what economists have developed.

On the fundamental issue between Marxian socialism vs. Biblical capitalism Calvinism, as far as we have been able to discover, is in a perfect quandary. Calvinism has to date been able to defend the Biblical position on property only by quoting texts. The socialists do not recognize the texts.

This bankruptcy of Calvinism toward socialism is as complete in the Netherlands as in the United States and elsewhere in the world.

Potential New Name For This Publication

A reader* has subjected the title of this publication to cogent critique. He declares that the word *Calvinism* is, in this situation, too restrictive and parochial. Why, he argues, should the ethics or economics taught in this publication be given the narrowly possessive label of *Calvinism*. We are, therefore, giving consideration to changing our title beginning in 1959.

Some of the titles which we are considering are:

Ethics and Economics
Christian Ethics and Secular Economics
Economics, Ethics, and Cosmology
Moral Precepts And Economic Laws

*Mr. Adolph O. Baumann of The Commodity Appraisal Service, Chicago.

Praxeology
Christian Ethics And The Praxeological Sciences
Authoritative Ethics And Autonomous Science
Ethics, Praxeology And Cosmology

All the foregoing titles will describe the contents of this publication more exactly than the present title. However, we have no intention of suppressing in future issues our peculiarly Calvinist tenets. Whether by education or independent judgment — no matter which — we remain explicitly Calvinist in ideas.

A good descriptive title is, we believe, "Christian Ethics And The Praxeological Sciences," but it is ponderous and the word *praxeological* is not readily understood. It means the sciences pertaining to human action. Obviously, praxeology is broader than economics. We do not wish to be restricted to economics only; for example, in early future issues we propose to examine with some care the theory of government which we favor over all other theories, that of the famous South Carolinian, John C. Calhoun. This is political science, a part of praxeology but not of economics.

The term *praxeology* was first used by Espinas in 1890 in an article in *Revue Philosophique*, XVth year, XXX, 114-115 and in his book with the title of *Praxeology* in 1897. Ludwig von Mises

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is, however, the scientist who has most effectively used and popularized the term; see his book *Human Action* (Yale University Press, New Haven, 1949).

However, even praxeology is occasionally too narrow a title for our purposes. We have an interest in cosmology as well as praxeology, and important aspects of cosmology are outside of praxeology.

The point at which praxeology and the natural sciences dovetail is of paramount importance. At this point the relationship between the material and the spiritual, the relationship between matter and thought, conjoin. If there is something *spiritual* that *exists*, a separate entity, then it should be discoverable or distinguishable at this point, if any. Consequently, at this point a man's basic epistemology is determined. Depending on what he does at this juncture, he is a positivist or an anti-positivist. There will be all degrees of anti-positivism. Some ideas held by Calvinists are positivist ideas, apparently without knowledge of the people holding those ideas. It is ridiculous to hold to both the Christian religion and positivism; they are irreconcilable.

The most inclusive title we might select is "Ethics, Praxeology and Cosmology."

Correction: Last month we ascribed to Voltaire the saying: "Sarcasm, I now see, to be in general the language of the devil." A reader has called to our attention that it was written by Carlyle.

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